

February 7, 2006

Representative Brian Palmer and the House Education Committee,

I am writing as a current 11th grade student at Center Line High School and the Macomb Math Science and Technology Center, about the new graduation requirements. I am currently enrolled in both physics and precalculus at MMSTC. I am an advanced student and one of the top 72 students in Macomb County.

I am having a difficult time taking physics. Physics is a strongly math based science. The topics that we cover in precalc many times are also taught in physics; sometimes the ideas are covered in physics first and later covered in precalc. In the new requirements physics is going to be taken first with chemistry and biology following behind it. This means that physics will have to be taken along with an earlier math class. If physics is taken at the same time as an algebra or geometry class, it will put more stress on the physics teacher. The teachers will have to teach the 'math part' of the physics before they can actually begin teaching the science aspects of the physics topic. This means that you are basically putting two classes, precalc and physics, into one.

I am also involved in the Concert/Marching Band at the high school level. Music and other 'electives' are just as important as any of the required classes. These music, art, physical education, or even social studies classes are beneficial to our future as much as, if not more than, our basic english, math and science classes. I know that band, along with other classes, teach things that can not be learned from a book; things like discipline, teamwork, and responsibility. Students should be allowed to take some elective classes of interest. It is important to get experiences from trying new things and not all students know what career field they want to pursue.

I strongly believe that the Center Line district has prepared me for college and my future. I have already visited many colleges and I feel that I am a strong applicant for whatever college I apply to. My school already requires four years of math, three years of science, and four years of english. On top of these requirements Center Line also expects students to select a 'career pathway' and to take three classes that relate to that particular path. I know that this has and will help me in the long run because I am already being exposed to classes that fit into the area of my future career.

By setting requirements that map out all four years of high school for students, you limit their interests and experiences. Some people will never have to take a math class outside of high school because that's not what they want to do with their life; others may never take a band class after they finish four years of high school band. The choice is up to each individual student, based on their interests and their life goals. The world needs musicians and artists as much as it needs scientists and mathematicians. By making the requirements the same for every single student, you get rid of individuality.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bethany Morrell". The letters are fluid and connected, with a prominent loop at the end of the last name.

Bethany Morrell

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